

Madam Speaker,

Twenty-three percent. That is the percentage of those living without health insurance in my district, the highest rate in New Jersey. My constituents are looking to me and this chamber to accomplish health care reform this year. We must finish our work not only for those without insurance, but for the other 77 percent that have insurance- but are finding coverage more expensive.

For those without insurance, we want to offer you affordable health care coverage. A new Exchange will be created as a one-stop comparison shopping marketplace- including a public option- to create competition for better prices and better coverage. To ensure coverage is within your means- affordability credits will be offered to help you buy insurance.

Our plan will end discrimination for preexisting conditions and require coverage of preventive care without co-pays. To ensure no one goes broke because they get sick, a yearly limit will be placed on how much you can be charged for out-of-pocket expenses. And if you lose or change jobs, you will be able to get your own affordable plan.

This nation deserves a more affordable and secure health care system; they cannot wait any longer for these reforms.

I yield back.